

Allentown Environmental Commission (AEC)

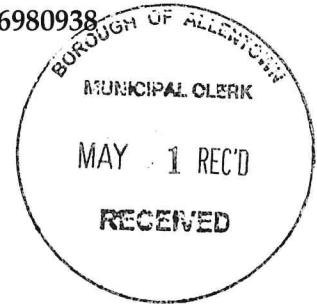
P.O. Box 487, 8 North Main Street

Zoom-<https://zoom.us/j/98956980938> Meeting ID:98956980938

Allentown, New Jersey 08501

8 December 2022

Minutes



Call to Order

The meeting was called to order in by Chairperson Bill Cotte at 6:06 p.m., and the following statement was read:

“In compliance with the ‘Open Public Meetings Act’, Chapter 231, PL 1975, Section 5, adequate notice has been given of this meeting by posting a Notice in the lobby of the Borough Hall, a public space; on the Borough’s website, Facebook page, and Twitter account and by transmitting a notice to two newspapers, THE TIMES and the ASBURY PARK PRESS, as required by law.”

Flag Salute

Role call - Present: Bill Cotte, Rick Jakober, Nancy Tindall, Wil Borkowski, Patricia Brown, and Jeff Ploshay, Jennifer Elder Brady, and Councilwoman Martha Johnson; Absent: Kirstin Jakober. A quorum was present.

Approval of agenda - Motion made by Patricia Brown and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Nancy Tindall to approve the agenda; motion passed.

Minutes Review -A motion was made by Rick Jakober and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bill Cotte to approve the November 3, 2022 meeting minutes; Motion was passed.

Public Participation (limited to 3 minutes) – Linda Cotte, Chair Economic Development Commission. Linda spoke about Earth Breeze laundry detergent, from company which is eco-responsible. She reported that statistically, 700,000 plastic jugs from detergents are tossed into landfills. Earth Breeze comes in paper packets and is totally recyclable. The company also gives to charitable organizations. Linda gave sample packets to AEC members and is hoping to promote a better sustainable laundry method throughout the Borough. There may also be future fundraising possibilities from the company.

Guest Speaker – Doressa Williams, Watershed Ambassador – Background discussion regarding Doressa’s role as Watershed Ambassador to the Allentown area. Her email is [wma20njwap@nj.com](mailto:wma20njwap@nj.com). She will be working through the Tulpehaking Nature Center in Trenton, NJ. She spoke of setting up a Rain Barrel Workshop and she will be working with local schools and doing water quality studies in Doctors Creek and Indian Run.

Communications/Correspondence - None

New Business – Nancy Tindall made a motion to send re-organization information to Laurie Roth, Borough Clerk and Administrator, regarding the setting of the meeting schedule for 2023, as the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of every month, 7 pm, including January 2024. Wil Borkowski 2<sup>nd</sup> motion; motion passed.

Old Business –

- Sterling Submission -Site Plan Review – Planning Board meeting was postponed to January 2023. Jennifer Elder Brady stated that the Planning Board will hear the variance approval request on February 6, 2023. There was not a complete application filed. Nancy Tindall said it would be helpful for AEC members to talk about the process for approving development in the Borough. She asked if the AEC will have more than 1 opportunity to make comments during the application process? Where does the AEC fit into the process? What subsequent information does the Commission need to provide? Bill Cotte will request the Planning Board’s engineering review from Ian Hill (Van Cleef engineering) and will ask for an electronic copy of everything that was submitted to send to AEC members. Andy Thomas, Borough Planner, reviewed plans regarding bulk, setback, and height variances. The developer wanted a waiver request for not showing the property within 500’. It’s missing the TOPO (topographical information) of the site. Bill suggested looking further at the coming new NJDEP stormwater regulations.
- Mercer Corporate Park – Bill Cotte and Pat Brown attended the Robbinsville Zoning Board meeting on December 6<sup>th</sup>. The Robbinsville Planning Board session was to review and approve the warehouse site plan for Mercer Corporate Park. A few planning board members asked some penetrating questions that raised concerns about levels of noise, traffic, and light from the pending construction. The fact that the property is being built on speculation, and nothing is known about any perspective warehouse user may not serve Johnson Development Assoc. (JDA) well. Developer witnesses repeated basic information that had been provided in previous hearings, and added detail on small recent alterations to building plans. Some residents living near the tract had brought their personal photographs of Bald eagles and other birds at the property that they hoped to show. The next stage of the deliberations had to be postponed until December 13<sup>th</sup>. An acoustics expert will be called as a witness for JDA. Rick suggested that there were imminent flooding issues for both the Stein property and Mercer Corporate Park (MCP). He said there was flood mapper/flood area information for MCP, and flood hazard analysis. Pat said that Princeton Hydro is doing analysis for MCP. Nancy said to look at calculations for the density or amount of developable areas. Maybe see about the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) regulations regarding Environmental Justice since the Stein property is so close to the major highway I-195. Wil said there was no adjoining sewer district. Jennifer said to request a landscape plan for taller trees, since the developer was requesting a waiver for treescape in and around the parking areas. Nancy noted that Robbinsville’s soils have to be reused on the properties and there is a reforestation ordinance. She asked if the Borough got updated plans from Robbinsville?
- Stein Property Update – Rick Jakober spoke about a health study regarding diesel truck exhaust and specific effects on pedestrians. The study reported the contamination and pollutants inhaled by pedestrians when a single truck went by. Diesel emissions, black

soot, and fumes were measured. Rick suggested that the Borough and the AEC look further regarding the impacts that the proposed development on the Stein property and Mercer Corporate Park will have on the health of people in the Borough especially since Allentown is a walkable town. Active Acquisitions Fund is looking into purchasing the Stein property and lists it as an industrial asset. Elliott Weisner, Allentown resident, has looked into the signage that has been posted by the developer who has filed it as a land asset. The property is in Robbinsville and Upper Freehold who received the application for flood hazard. Rick reminder AEC that he filed for a NJDEP "incident" where someone was bulldozing the Phragmitis on the property. It was reported in the NJDEP Dataminer and given a case number and status.

- Composting Update – Nancy Tindall – Nancy is gathering more information about a pilot composting service for Allentown and she will contact Andrew Plunkett, Allentown High School Environmental Science teacher to see what the high school is doing with regards to composting.

#### Other Business –

- Electric vehicle (EV) charging stations – Councilwoman, Erica DeKranes, spoke about the possibility of EV charging stations for the Borough. The Borough Council and Mayor Fritts are looking into grant money, locations for the stations, etc. There are State, Federal, and PSE&G funds available.

Adjournment There being no further business, a motion was made by Nancy Tindall and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Wil Borkowski to adjourn the meeting at 7:32 p.m.; The motion passed.

Next Regular Meeting - Thursday, January 5, 2023, 7:00 PM Borough Hall in person and on Zoom.  
Re-Org.